

## Environmental Resources Section

### Adopt-A-Highway Program

#### BACKGROUND:

Adopt-A-Highway is a cooperative program between the Divisions of Natural Resources and Highways and was created to improve the appearance of West Virginia highways by involving the public in litter removal and control. Volunteers are invited to adopt two or more miles of highway for two or more years. The State provides garbage bags, gloves, safety vests, and traffic control signs. It also collects and disposes of bagged litter. Adopted highways are identified at each end by signs bearing the Adopt-A-Highway logo and the name of the volunteer.



The Division of Natural Resources promotes the program, writes policy, recruits volunteers, maintains records and statistics and coordinates special events and educational programs. The Division of Highways assigns adopted highways, distributes supplies, and picks up and disposes of bagged litter. The primary goal is to encourage, organize, coordinate and increase public awareness of and participation in voluntary litter control campaigns and to focus the attention of the public on the problems created by littering.

Funding for the program is provided by a one dollar fee imposed on the issuance of each motor vehicle certificate of registration and renewal issued by the State of West Virginia. Money collected from this fee is deposited in the state treasury and credited to the Highway Litter Control Fund. The fee is collected by the Division of Motor Vehicles and transferred to the Division of Highways. The Division of Highways in turn transfers \$500,000 annually to the Division of Natural Resources to administer the program.

Highway litter is composed of 59 percent paper, 16 percent cans, 6 percent bottles, 6 percent plastic and 13 percent miscellaneous items. The item most often found during litter cleanups is fast food wrappers. The second most

often found item is beer cans. Businesses adopt more highways than any other group followed closely by community groups and churches. The fastest growing categories of Adopt-A-Highway volunteers are families and individuals.

#### WV Adopt-A-Highway Category Totals

Organization Type	Number In Program
4-H	107
Boy Scouts	23
Business	147
CEO	34
Church	183
Civitan	3
Community	219
Elks	8
Environmental	13
Family	88
Farm	23
Fraternity	27
Garden Club	7
Governmental	22
Girl Scout	1
In Memory Of	14
Individual	44
Kiwanis	16
Labor/Union	7
Lions Club	83
Military/ROTC	11
Miscellaneous	41
Moose	10
Penal Institution	13
Rotary Club	17
Ruritan Club	57
School	68
Sports Team	23
Veterans Organization	18
Volunteer Fire Department	18
Womans Club	13
Weight Loss	4
Youth Group	16

## Environmental Resources Section

### WV Adopt-A-Highway County Totals

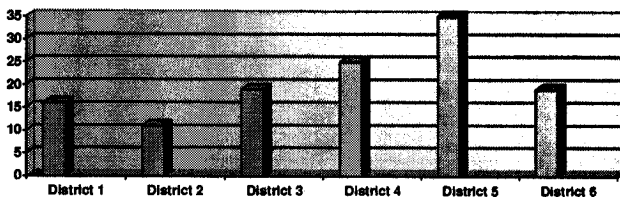
County	Number of Organizations	Number of Members	Number of Miles	Bags	Hours	Glass	Plastic	Alum
BARBOUR	18	330	41	4,362	843			69
BERKELEY	47	1,372	110	16,071	2,145	757	53	147
BOONE	14	290	43	4,029	484			348
BRAXTON	11	135	28	1,664	459			243
BROOKE	9	134	20	2,007	331	200		126
CABELL	14	287	27	2,572	497			
CALHOUN	5	59	12	1,563	257			169
CLAY	17	171	47	2,508	641	21	5	161
DODDRIDGE	20	174	55	1,963	881	2		140
FAYETTE	64	897	160	21,426	3,457	434	240	836
GILMER	23	319	65	5,811	1,378	212	51	281
GRANT	12	218	37	4,257	845	30	15	186
GREENBRIER	53	830	385	16,765	3,358	107	53	584
HAMPSHIRE	49	620	132	12,637	3,214	266		1,019
HANCOCK	8	191	19	1,430	241			34
HARDY	25	461	70	5,325	1,131			105
HARRISON	39	684	89	11,597	1,904	524	151	948
JACKSON	34	543	75	4,477	1,049	100	6	325
JEFFERSON	57	722	125	17,451	3,238	429	92	500
KANAWHA	88	1,622	234	22,447	4,036	58	51	368
LEWIS	13	218	30	3,276	524		16	69
LINCOLN	15	221	34	1,910	524	2,475	564	750
LOGAN	25	462	55	4,444	713	10	20	150
MARION	28	367	69	5,983	955	85	5	461
MARSHALL	26	367	63	4,753	1,051	5	5	1,304
MASON	23	427	54	4,741	831	169	74	272
MCDOWELL	9	147	22	2,378	463			40
MERCER	40	750	96	14,471	2,522	86	82	762
MINERAL	26	1,003	61	8,027	1,613	380	80	293
MINGO	12	169	25	1,281	1,147	41	16	111
MONONGALIA	37	1,029	93	9,964	3,257	154	33	224
MONROE	19	179	55	5,763	1,519	1	5	326
MORGAN	21	211	48	3,093	643	53	2	76
NICHOLAS	20	264	53	7,404	1,615	5	0	325
OHIO	28	584	63	4,899	1,229	5	2	130
PENDLETON	32	289	83	7,591	1,950	3,050	209	350
PLEASANTS	6	90	18	1,632	264			101
POCAHONTAS	21	203	61	4,022	700	8		394
PRESTON	35	539	95	10,822	2,477	183	58	791
PUTNAM	23	1,022	74	6,269	1,036	7,435	1,878	885
RALEIGH	32	888	74	6,437	1,303	98	6	304
RANDOLPH	38	678	96	12,631	2,458	374	347	1,496
RITCHIE	13	147	38	3,362	941			246
ROANE	14	260	29	2,371	488			55
SUMMERS	20	275	48	3,762	941	111	28	522
TAYLOR	13	146	30	1,442	347	21	7	115
TUCKER	24	277	74	7,808	1,749	2	0	547
TYLER	16	133	40	2,551	844	10	15	55
UPSHUR	33	519	83	4,759	1,344	95	10	164
WAYNE	10	145	22	2,013	318			
WEBSTER	28	279	80	3,295	652	75	30	215
WETZEL	10	105	28	3,416	789	554	245	529
WIRT	11	172	25	1,097	303	14	2	195
WOOD	45	817	105	9,815	2,024	1,132	107	938
WYOMING	10	153	28	4,145	688			3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,383</b>	<b>23,594</b>	<b>3,725</b>	<b>341,989</b>	<b>70,611</b>	<b>19,771</b>	<b>4,563</b>	<b>19,787</b>

## Environmental Resources Section

### GOALS/OBJECTIVES:

- Regenerate enthusiasm among volunteers who have been involved in the program for 10 or more years by rewarding them for their continued support, and through increased personal contact by district environmental coordinators.
- Decrease litter at roadside parks, park and rides, and wide areas used as pull-offs.
- Air public service announcements on cable television and radio statewide to encourage participation in Adopt-A-Highway and to discourage littering.
- Increase the number of highway miles adopted for the purpose of litter control.
- Increase participation in the annual Adopt-A-Highway Appreciation Day Picnic where volunteers are rewarded for their efforts to keep our highways litter free.
- Increase participation in the spring and fall statewide roadside cleanups.
- Encourage greater participation by community groups such as Ruritan, Civitans, and Rotary clubs.
- Initiate a litter survey to aid in advertising and further development of the Adopt-A-Highway Program and litter control.

FY 2003 New AAH Applications by DNR Districts					
District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6
16	11	19	25	35	19



### STRATEGIES:

The following programs have been developed and are being implemented to meet these goals:

#### Eleventh Annual Adopt-A-Highway Fall Cleanup

On September 28, 2002, volunteers from all 55 counties removed 622,322 pounds of litter from state highways. They recycled 2,847 pounds of glass, 1,777 pounds of plastic and 3,571 pounds of aluminum. Division of Highways county garages are open on the Saturday of the cleanup to distribute supplies and assist volunteers. Division of Natural Resources environmental coordinators assisted volunteers in picking up litter during this event.

#### Eleventh Annual Adopt-A-Highway Spring Cleanup

On Saturday, April 26, 2003, 9,641 volunteers representing all 55 counties picked up 842,366 pounds of roadside litter. They recycled 4,253 pounds of glass, 2,864 pounds of plastic, and 3,158 pounds of aluminum. Division of Highways county garages are open on the Saturday of the cleanup to distribute supplies and assist volunteers. DNR environmental coordinators assisted volunteers in picking up litter during this event.

#### Volunteer Scheduled Cleanups

Volunteers scheduled additional cleanups during the year at times convenient to them. These cleanups resulted in 3,453 miles of highway adopted by 1,366 organizations comprised of 23,515 volunteers. The volunteers removed 4,001,632 pounds of litter from state highways. Volunteers collect an average of three million pounds of litter annually. More than 900 million pounds of litter have been removed from state highways since the program began.

#### Adopt-A-Highway Volunteer Appreciation Day

More than 300 volunteers attended the Fifth Annual Adopt-A-Highway Volunteer Appreciation Day Picnic at Canaan Valley State Park in August 2003. Certificates of Achievement and awards were presented to volunteers for their efforts to keep highways litter free. The day-long event featured entertainment, indoor and outdoor games and a picnic lunch.

## Environmental Resources Section

### Advertising

Production of a new public service announcement featuring Governor Bob Wise delivering a message that littering is illegal and offenders will receive points against their driver's license was produced. The 30 second spot ran on MetroNews Radio and on cable television stations throughout the state. Roady Raccoon, the Adopt -A - Highway mascot, continues to be a favorite among children. A Roady costume has been made and is loaned to schools and used for special events. A 30-second public service announcement featuring Roady was also produced to promote the Adopt-A-Highway Spring and Fall Cleanups.



### Adopt-A-Highway Volunteers Encouraged to Recycle

During fiscal year 2002-2003, Adopt-A-Highway volunteers recycled 11,559 pounds of glass, 8,717 pounds of plastic and 9,686 pounds of aluminum.

### Web Page

Volunteers are now able to sign up for statewide cleanups and report cleanup information on the Adopt-A-Highway Web page.

### VISION FOR THE FUTURE:

West Virginia has more than 32,000 miles of adoptable highways excluding interstate highways that are not adoptable. There are currently 3,453 miles of highway adopted that represents only 11 percent of the available miles. Some of these miles have unsafe berms or are not suitable for adoption due to unsafe conditions. Our vision for the future is to increase the miles of highway adopted, educate a greater segment of the public concerning the ills of littering through radio and television public service announcements and printed media, and create a good first impression for out-of-state travelers through cleaner highways.

### Adopt-A-Spot Program

An extension of the Adopt-A-Highway Program, Adopt-A-Spot, allows volunteers to adopt smaller sections of state road right-of-way, up to ¼ mile in length, to keep them litter free. Since the inception of the program in 2002, 1,031 volunteers comprising 100 Adopt-A-Spot groups have removed 18,690 pounds of litter from our state's roadsides. (See table on next page.)



### Operation Wildflower

#### BACKGROUND:

Operation Wildflower is a joint project between the Divisions of Highways and Natural Resources in



cooperation with WV Garden Club, Inc. It has brought beauty and diversity to West Virginia highways for many years. Colorful wildflowers greet visitors from Virginia on I-64 and I-81. Route 19 welcomes travelers with fields of flowers near the New River Gorge Bridge. Interstate 79, winding south from Pennsylvania through Morgantown and Clarksburg, has many beautiful sites. Corridor G between Charleston and Madison and Corridor H from Elkins toward Canaan Valley greet travelers with red, blue, yellow, pink and white blooms. Operation Wildflower has been, and continues to be, an asset to the mountain state.

In recent years, wildflowers have become widely recognized and appreciated as an economical and environmentally friendly way to enhance highways. It is the responsibility of the Environmental Resources Section of the Division of Natural Resources to coordinate donations from private citizens with the Division of Highways to ensure that highway beautification is accomplished.

The program offers individuals, businesses, civic groups and communities an excellent opportunity to add beauty and

## Environmental Resources Section

### WV Adopt-A-Spot County Totals

County	Number of Organizations	Number Of Members	Number of Miles	Bags	Hours	Glass	Plastic	Alum
BARBOUR	1	10		17	4			
BOONE	1	12		5	5			
BRAXTON	1	4		8	3			
CABELL	1	2		32	8			
CLAY	2	7		39	12			
FAYETTE	6	79		29	21	20		26
GRANT	2	5		28	6			4
GREENBRIER	2	40		33	8			
HAMPSHIRE	3	5		22	12	16	6	12
HARDY	1	25		4	1			
HARRISON	7	53		59	36			11
JACKSON	2	55		9	3			
JEFFERSON	3	39		42	8			75
KANAWHA	7	71		10	5			
LEWIS	3	72	1	3	3	10	27	3
MARION	3	49						
MARSHALL	1	20		15	3			
MCDOWELL	1	3						
MERCER	6	48		26	11			
MINERAL	2	15		27	8			
MINGO	1	1		19	22			5
MONONGALIA	1	55		34	6			
MONROE	1	2		9	8			10
NICHOLAS	3	3						
OHIO	1	2		1	1			
PENDLETON	2	26	1	32	3			
PUTNAM	1	2						
RALEIGH	6	43	4	9	3			
RANDOLPH	3	12		8	3			
SUMMERS	1	6	1	1	1			
TYLER	1	4						
UPSHUR	5	24	1	6	4			
WEBSTER	14	113	1	57	11			12
WETZEL	2	70		18	4			
WOOD	2	46		6	5			35
WYOMING	1	8		15	2			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>193</b>



## Environmental Resources Section

---

diversity to highway landscapes. For a donation of \$250 for half an acre or \$500 for an acre the contributor receives a beautiful roadside wildflower site planted and maintained by the State for three years.

The Division of Natural Resources solicits donations for wildflower sites, selects wildflower species, orders seed, advises on planting methods and acts as a liaison between the public, state and garden clubs. The Division of Highways assigns planting areas, and then prepares, plants and maintains them. WV Garden Club, Inc. receives donations and pays for seed purchases. Annuals are currently planted in wildflower beds because invading weeds have proven to be a great problem in perennial beds. The current highway wildflower mix includes blue Bachelors Button, yellow Coreopsis, red Poppy and pink Cosmos. Future plans include experimentation with perennials and native plants and grasses.

Operation Wildflower received \$6,797 in contributions during fiscal year 2002-2003. A total of \$151,271 has been donated to the program by the public since 1990. There are currently 133 one-half acre sites and 36 one acre sites that have been donated statewide. The Division of Highways has planted an additional 93 sites without the benefit of donations. The majority of sites are donated "In Memory of" a loved one by people from out of state whose parents or relatives were originally residents of West Virginia. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of plots donated at the site of automobile accidents. A sign bearing the name of the contributor or the person of his or her choice is mounted at each wildflower site.

### GOALS/OBJECTIVES:

- Increase the number of West Virginia native flower species planted along interstate highways.
- Secure dedicated funding for Operation Wildflower.
- Set policy and guidelines for site preparation and planting to bring the program into conformity statewide.
- Increase the number of pure native plantings at Interstate rest stops, Interstate rights-of-way and rural roads.

### STRATEGIES:

The following programs have been developed and are being implemented to meet these goals:

#### Wildflower Plantings

Twenty-five new donated wildflower sites were planted during the 2002-2003 fiscal year. These sites were planted with the standard annual mix of Corn Poppy, Bachelors Button, Coreopsis and Wild Cosmos. While Coreopsis is the only native in the mix, a number of native plants have been planted at single plant stands around the state. Those perennial species include: Tickseed, Ox-eyed Daisy, Butterfly Weed, Black-eyed Susan and Beard-tongue. These sites are mowed down when flowers go to seed.

#### Funding

The estimated cost of planting an acre of wildflower is \$1,000. This amount includes site preparation, planting and maintenance. Although the amounts donated were raised to \$500 and \$250 for Spring 2002 planting, they still fall woefully short of the funds needed to sustain the program. Realizing that public donations are not sufficient to cover these costs, it is imperative that a dedicated funding source be found. It is apparent that we have reached a plateau with the wildflower program and will not be able to go beyond that point unless funding is made available specifically for that purpose. Successful programs in other states are funded through General Revenue Funds.

#### Uniform Planting and Maintenance Policy

The Division of Highways is divided into 10 districts. Planting methods and maintenance procedures are currently determined by each district, resulting in inconsistent success of wildflower sites from district to district. Division of Highways and Natural Resources coordinators are in the process of standardizing planting and maintenance procedures to achieve a more uniform success rate throughout the state.

#### Native Wildflower Plantings

Four native wildflower projects have been created at

## Environmental Resources Section

interstate roadside rest areas. The West Virginia Native Plant Society planted and maintains a site at the first rest stop coming into the state from Kentucky just outside of Huntington. The second is located on I-64 at the westbound rest area at Hurricane. The third native species project is located at the White Sulphur Springs rest stop on I-64 just inside the West Virginia border. The White Sulphur Springs project was made possible by a donation from the West Virginia Wildflower Pilgrimage. Five hundred mature West Virginia native plants were planted directly in front of the tourist information building at the rest stop. These plants have been identified with signs bearing the name of each plant. The purpose of this project is to educate the public about native West Virginia plants. A fourth site is located on I-79 near Clarksburg.

### VISION FOR THE FUTURE

West Virginia's highways are a visitor's introduction to our state and the people who live here. The first impression formed by these travelers as they drive through our state is perhaps the only one they will have an opportunity to form. It is therefore our vision that travelers will be greeted with beautiful West Virginia native wildflowers.

### West Virginia Make It Shine

The West Virginia Make It Shine Program was created with the goal of making West Virginia one of the cleanest states in the nation. It is a multifaceted program which incorporates partnership of the public and private sector and seeks to promote interaction of all organizations within the state that are interested in protection and improvement of the state's environment.

A major facet of the program is the recognition of those West Virginians who have made a significant contribution

towards cleaning up the state. Each year West Virginia Make It Shine recognizes counties and communities across the state which have implemented comprehensive environmental programs. The West Virginia Make It Shine Clean County Awards and the West Virginia Make It Shine Community Awards are presented each year at the Governor's Conference on Environmental Education and Litter Control.

### WEST VIRGINIA MAKE IT SHINE CLEAN COUNTY AWARD

The West Virginia Make It Shine Clean County Award is presented each year to counties that have demonstrated environmental stewardship and promoted environmental activities. Applicants submit a detailed report on a county-wide environmental activity and are judged in the following categories:

- Need for project
- Quality of method
- Obstacles overcome
- Cooperation within county
- Resources used
- Persistence
- Degree of success
- Continuation of project
- Impact on county

Winners receive an invitation to attend the Governor's Conference where they are presented a certificate by the Governor and a cash award by a corporate sponsor. The following counties were this year's recipients of the West Virginia Make It Shine Clean County Award:

<b>First Place</b>	-	Webster County
<b>Second Place</b>	-	Jefferson County
<b>Third Place</b>	-	Lincoln County
<b>Fourth Place</b>	-	Clay County
<b>Fifth Place</b>	-	Marion County

